

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the final Office Action dated March 12, 2007, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1, 4, 7-27, and 30-33 are pending in the application. With this Response, claims 1, 7, 15-17, 25, 27, 31 and 33 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced; thus, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7, 15-16, 25, 27, 30 and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1, 4, 7-27 and 30-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Yamauchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,652,896, hereafter "Yamauchi"). The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

With regard to the §112 rejections, the Applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 15-16, 25, 27, 30 and 33 to clarify their meaning. The Applicants respectfully request that the §112 rejections now be withdrawn.

With regard to the §102 rejections, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 17, 25, 27, 31 and 33 to further distinguish over Yamauchi. In particular, the independent claims have been amended to point out that the claimed *converting step or means converts an inputted natural language into a plurality of representations of the natural language; and the confirmation step or means confirms that at least one of the representations is closest in meaning to the inputted natural language*. These features are fully supported by the Applicants' Application and are not disclosed by Yamauchi.

Yamauchi discloses a language conversion system that converts an original sentence in a source-language into a translated sentence in a target-language. The sentence of the source-language is provided from, for example, a keyboard or scanner. A translation editor 7 formats the inputted sentence and stores the result in an original text database 9. A translation body 8 translates the sentence processed by the translation editor 7 and stores the result of the translation in a translation text database 12. A text editing unit implements the use of pointers to indicate correspondence between content in the original text database 9 and the content in the translation text database 12. Additionally, as part of the translation process, idea centers (ICs) are implemented to extract central terms in the sentence inputted and compare those central terms to terms in an IC candidate database. (see Yamauchi, col. 12, lines 1-21).

Based on the foregoing, the reference appears to fall short of the present invention as recited in the independent claims (as amended). First, in the present invention, there is a plurality of representations (of the same language) generated from the inputted natural language. Conversely, in Yamauchi the translation involves a one-to-one correspondence between the inputted words or sentences and the representation generated (e.g., using a keyboard or scanner). Additionally, in the present invention, a confirmation is performed to confirm a representation closest in meaning to the natural language inputted. Yamauchi is silent with regard to any such confirmation.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 17, 25, 27, 31 and 33 (as amended) are distinguished over the cited references. Additionally, dependent claims 4, 7-16, 18-24, 26, 30 and 32 are distinguished over the cited reference based at least on their dependency from independent claims 1, 17, 25, 27 and 31.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims of the present application are both novel and non-obvious over the cited references. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Director is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket number (0112857-779) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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